Greg Mortenson’s persistence to build a school for the children in Korphe, Pakistan continues through chapter 9. While in Rawalpindi, Mortenson meets a hotel watchman who proves to be of use to him. Abdul Sha is a Pakistani native who is familiar with the proper negotiation rituals custom to the country. He teaches Mortenson the how to barter with businessmen and what products are adequate for his construction project. Sha also introduces Mortenson to local religious ways. Mortenson begins taking prayer classes at a nearby gas station to better understand the Pakistani culture, but ends up greatly appreciating the power of communal worship. Mortenson receives a prayer from the villagers before departing for Korphe. However, rebels and inability to store the goods delay Greg’s voyage. A friend of Mortenson, Ali Changazi, stores the building materials and takes Mortenson to nearby villages to meet the people there. At these villages, to the townspeople viciously argue about how Mortenson will build the school in their town, though Mortenson is adamant about starting construction in Korphe. Unfortunately, the project is further delayed by the lack of a bridge to transport the supplies across the river. The people of Korphe remain hopeful, though, so Mortenson returns home to San Francisco to try to raise more money.

Greg Mortenson certainly faces his share of issues in this section. Though at the beginning he remains hopeful about his little project, he quickly realizes that Pakistan is not really an ideal place to spontaneously do service projects. With rebel gunman along the highway and no shortage of under-developed villages, Mortenson faces numerous obstacles that prevent him from accomplishing his goal. It seemed like something went wrong on every-other page through this section of the book. I’m not even entirely sure how he’s even going to finish at this rate.

This section of Three Cups of Tea really demonstrates how important culture is to people of the world. Mortenson drove himself to learn and comprehend to ways of Pakistani business; a tool incredibly valuable to him when trying to buy supplies for the school. The ways that Pakistani people barter is unique to all others in the world, making the understanding and correct practice of it vital in the Middle East. Later, Mortenson further submerses himself into the Pakistani culture by taking prayer classes to connect himself more deeply to the Middle he was helping. Religion is an intricate aspect of culture, one that has also spanned the time of human life.